

REMARKS

The above amendments to the above-captioned application along with the following remarks are being submitted as a full and complete response to the Office Action dated March 3, 2006 (U.S. Patent Office Paper No. 20060228). In view of the above amendments and the following remarks, the Examiner is respectfully requested to give due reconsideration to this application, to indicate the allowability of the claims, and to pass this case to issue.

Status of the Claims

As outlined above, claims 1-15 stand for consideration in this application, wherein claims 6-15 are being canceled without prejudice or disclaimer.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants respectfully thank the Examiner for holding that claims 1-5 are allowed.

Formal Objections

Claim 12 was objected to because of the informalities. Claim 12 is being canceled, and therefore this objection is moot. Accordingly, withdrawal of this objection is respectfully requested.

Prior Art Rejections

The First 35 U.S.C. §103(a) rejection

Claims 6, 12, and 15 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being allegedly unpatentable over Hartemann et al (US 4,515,016) in view of Tavkhelidze et al. (US 6,720,704) and Yano et al. (US 4,814,657). Claims 6, 12, and 15 are being canceled, and therefore this rejection is moot. Accordingly, withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

The Second 35 U.S.C. §103(a) rejection

Claims 7, 8, 13, and 14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being allegedly unpatentable over Hartemann et al (US 4,515,016) in view of Tavkhelidze et al. (US 6,720,704) and Yano et al. (US 4,814,657), and further in view of Kasahara et al. (US 2001/0028203). Claims 7, 8, 13, and 14 are also being canceled, and therefore this rejection is moot. Accordingly, withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

The Third 35 U.S.C. §103(a) rejection

Claims 9, 10, and 11 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being allegedly unpatentable over Hartemann et al (US 4,515,016) in view of Tavkhelidze et al. (US 6,720,704) and Yano et al. (US 4,814,657), and further in view of ordinary skill in the art. Claims 9, 10, and 11 are also being canceled, and therefore this rejection is moot. Accordingly, withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

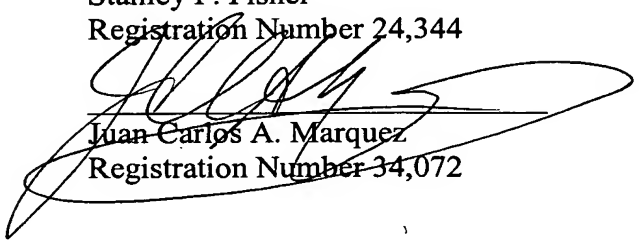
Conclusion

Applicants respectfully request that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case.

Should there be any outstanding issues requiring discussion that would further the prosecution and allowance of the above-captioned application, the Examiner is invited to contact the Applicant's undersigned representative at the address and phone number indicated below.

Respectfully submitted,

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